

**«FIGHTING TERRORISM IN YEMEN»****Umurbaev Rustam Shakirjanovich***4th-year student of Tashkent State University of Oriental Studies Tashkent city*

**Abstract:** *The closing months of 2009 witnessed an upsurge in international interest in the links between Yemen. Both countries were already recognized as trouble spots, with proven potential to threaten international security and a record of association with al-Qaeda. But neither had previously merited concerted Western engagement on the scale of Afghanistan or Pakistan. In the world of counter-terrorism policy, Yemen and Somalia hovered in the margins: not so dangerous as to require direct intervention but still too serious to ignore.*

**Key words:** *Populations, unemployment, government, migration, invasion.*

**Introduction.** Since late 2009, events have continued to raise anxiety about the security risks emanating from the region. They include emerging evidence of American-Somali recruitment into al-Shabaab, the militant Islamist group now controlling most of south central Somalia, and allegations that the Nigerian citizen arrested for the attempted US airline bombing on Christmas Day 2009 was trained in Yemen. Al-Shabaab's declaration of practical support for al-Qaeda in February reinforced fears of increased cooperation between al-Qaeda affiliates in the region, and al-Shabaab's terrorist attacks in Kampala, Uganda, in July reminded policy-makers of the scale of the security threat and the vulnerability of the region. In September, the director-general of Britain's security service, Jonathan Evans, declared that terrorist plots hatched in Somalia and Yemen posed a growing threat to the UK. Yemen - the poorest country in the Middle East - faces a population boom, rising unemployment and an acute economic crisis provoked by declining oil production. In addition to pursuing relatively small numbers of al-Qaeda operatives, the government also confronts persistent challenges from southern separatists and northern insurgents. Western policy-makers and regional Arab states are growing increasingly concerned about Yemen's ability to maintain security and stability with ever fewer resources. In Somalia state collapse is already well advanced and forms the backdrop to an apparently intractable regional security conundrum. There is growing realization that, despite coordinated Western backing, the feeble Transitional Federal Government (TFG) is not making any headway against al-Shabaab.

Yemen is treated as a «fragile» state, while Somalia, after 20 years of collapse, is often described as a «failed» state. In the interstices between weak state institutions, and even more so in their absence, shadow networks have room to thrive. A number of such networks exist within and between Yemen and Somalia, facilitating a flourishing regional trade in arms, people-smuggling, and fuel-smuggling. The main purpose of such networks is to make money, but they also have the potential to enable



more sinister exchanges. Growing external interest in Yemen and Somalia reflects concerns about a new zone of instability spanning the Gulf of Aden, playing host to a core of trained militants and populations in both countries that are hostile to the United States and its allies. Fears are sharpened by the fact that al-Qaeda is thought to be targeting the recruitment of US citizens, including converts to Islam and so-called «non-traditional» recruits to launch attacks against American targets within the Middle East and beyond.

The prospect of American and European citizens being trained at al-Qaeda camps in the two countries deepens concern and «emphasises the need to understand the nature of the evolving dangers». This paper charts the emergence of al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and al-Shabaab, their potential convergence, and the parallel problem of the involvement of «foreigners» in both organizations. It then looks at the wider set of relationships between the Horn of Africa and Yemen, including migration, arms flows and piracy in the Gulf of Aden. The paper examines the challenges of developing counter-terrorism strategies in countries characterized by state fragility and state failure. It discusses the limitations of the state-building framework on which Western engagement in Yemen and Somalia is based, the primacy so often given to security interventions and the corresponding difficulty of supporting political processes that improve. Al-Qaeda has enjoyed strong symbolic and practical ties to Yemen since the organization's inception at the end of the Cold War.

Usama bin Laden, of Yemeni-syrian descent, has relied on the loyalty and personal service of ethnic Yemenis raised in Saudi Arabia and of Yemeni nationals too. Significant numbers of Yemenis fought Soviet troops in Afghanistan in the 1980s and trained in al-Qaeda camps during the late 1990s. Yemenis constitute the largest ethnic group among those still detained at the US prison camp in Guantánamo.

Yemeni veterans of the Afghan jihad who returned home after the Soviet withdrawal played an important role both in al-Qaeda's evolution and in the consolidation of the modern Yemeni state. A year before the Black Hawk incident, bin Laden's associates in Yemen carried out the world's first attempted al-Qaeda-style bombing against US troops stationed in Aden en route to Somalia. In 1994, Yemen's Afghan veterans helped President Ali Abdullah Saleh win a civil war against separatists in the south, and many subsequently received government stipends, strengthening ties between the mujahideen and senior figures in Yemen's security structures.

In 1999, one of bin Laden's childhood friends - known as Khallad - was released from a Yemeni prison in a so-called «covenant of security» deal that guaranteed bin Laden's men freedom of movement on the condition that al-Qaeda would not target the Yemeni authorities. On 12 October 2000, 17 US sailors were killed in a suicide bomb attack on the USS Cole in Aden harbour. Yemen was the source of several crucial pieces of information in the hands of US intelligence agents that could have prevented the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001.



The authors of the US 9/11 Commission Report argue that Yemeni nationals would have played a more prominent role in the 2001 attacks if US visa restrictions had not prevented their participation. It was bin Laden's former bodyguard, held in a Yemeni jail, who enabled US investigators to make a positive identification between the 9/11 hijackers and al-Qaeda, and provided information that helped the US military plan the invasion of Afghanistan.

**Conclusion.** In the aftermath of 9/11, the Yemeni government made a tactical decision to align itself with the US as a partner in the «war on terror». The leader of al-Qaeda in Yemen was killed in a US missile strike in 2002, and Yemen's security services subsequently arrested or eliminated the remaining figures in the organization. However, al-Qaeda in Yemen reformed following a 2006 prison break in which 23 terrorist convicts and suspects escaped. Since 2006, Yemen's jihadi networks have benefited from the migration of Saudi operatives to escape an effective counter-terrorism campaign inside the northern kingdom.

#### REFERENCES:

1. Yotam Feldman and Uri Blau, «Consent and advise», Haaretz, 29 January 2009.
2. Hilaire McCoubrey and Nigel D. White, International Law and Armed Conflict, Dartmouth Publishing Company Limited, Aldershot, 1992, p. 318.
3. James G. Stewart, «Towards a single definition of armed conflict in international humanitarian law: A critique of internationalized armed conflict», International Review of the Red Cross, Vol. 85, No. 850, June 2003, pp. 313-50.
4. See Article 1 of Convention III relative to the Opening of Hostilities (Hague Convention III), 18 October 1907.
5. Christopher Greenwood, «The concept of war in modern international law». International and Comparative Law Quarterly, Vol. 36 (1987), pp. 283-306.